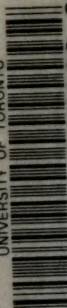


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SPREADING THE NEWS, THE  
RISING OF THE MOON, BY  
LADY GREGORY; THE POOR-  
HOUSE, BY DOUGLAS HYDE  
AND LADY GREGORY; BEING  
VOLUME IX. OF THE ABBEY  
THEATRE SERIES.



SPREADING THE NEWS. THE RISING  
OF THE MOON. BY LADY GREGORY.  
THE POORHOUSE. BY LADY <sup>Augusta</sup> GREGORY  
AND DOUGLAS HYDE.



DUBLIN: MAUNSEL & CO., LTD., 1906.



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America.]*



SPREADING THE NEWS.

SPREADING THE NEWS was produced for the first time at the opening of the Abbey Theatre, on Tuesday, December 27, 1904, with the following cast :—

<i>Bartley Fallon,</i>	..	W. G. FAY.
<i>Mrs. Fallon,</i>	..	SARA ALGOOD.
<i>Mrs. Tully,</i>	..	EMMA VERNON.
<i>Mrs. Tarpey,</i>	..	MAIRE NI GHARBHAIGH.
<i>Shawn Early,</i>	..	J. H. DUNNE.
<i>Tim Casey,</i>	..	GEORGE ROBERTS.
<i>James Ryan,</i>	..	ARTHUR SINCLAIR.
<i>Jack Smith,</i>	..	P. MAC SUIBHLAIGH.
<i>A Policeman,</i>	..	R. S. NASH.
<i>A Removable Magistrate,</i>		F. J. FAY.



# SPREADING THE NEWS.

## PERSONS.

BARTLEY FALLON.

MRS. FALLON.

JACK SMITH.

SHAWN EARLY.

TIM CASEY.

JAMES RYAN.

MRS. TARPEY.

MRS. TULLY.

A POLICEMAN (JO MULDOON).

A REMOVABLE MAGISTRATE.

SCENE : *The outskirts of a Fair. An Apple Stall. Mrs. Tarpey sitting at it. Magistrate and Policemen enter.*

*Magistrate.* So that is the Fair Green. Cattle and sheep and mud. No system. What a repulsive sight!

*Policeman.* That is so, indeed.

*Magistrate.* I suppose there is a good deal of disorder in this place?

*Policeman.* There is.

*Magistrate.* Common assault?

*Policeman.* It's common enough.

*Magistrate.* Agrarian crime, no doubt?

*Policeman.* That is so.

*Magistrate.* Boycotting? Maiming of cattle? Firing into houses?

*Policeman.* There was one time, and there might be again.

*Magistrate.* That is bad. Does it go any farther than that?

*Policeman.* Far enough, indeed.

*Magistrate.* Homicide, then! This district has been shamefully neglected! I will change all that. When I was in the Andaman Islands, my system never failed. Yes, yes, I will change all that. What has that woman on her stall?

*Policeman.* Apples mostly—and sweets.

*Magistrate.* Just see if there are any unlicensed goods underneath—spirits or the like. We had evasions of the salt tax in the Andaman Islands.

*Policeman (sniffing cautiously and upsetting a heap of apples).* I see no spirits here—or salt.

*Magistrate (to Mrs. Tarpey).* Do you know this town well, my good woman?

*Mrs. Tarpey (holding out some apples).* A penny the half-dozen, your honour?

*Policeman (shouting).* The gentleman is asking do you know the town! He's the new magistrate!

*Mrs. Tarpey (rising and ducking).* Do I know the town? I do, to be sure.

*Magistrate (shouting).* What is its chief business?

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Business is it? What business would the people here have but to be minding one another's business?

*Magistrate.* I mean what trade have they?

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Not a trade. No trade at all but to be talking.

*Magistrate.* I shall learn nothing here.

[*James Ryan comes in, pipe in mouth. Seeing Magistrate he retreats quickly, taking pipe from mouth.*

*Magistrate.* The smoke from that man's pipe had a greenish look ; he may be growing unlicensed tobacco at home. I wish I had brought my telescope to this district. Come to the post-office, I will telegraph for it. I found it very useful in the Andaman Islands. [*Magistrate and Policeman go out left.*

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Bad luck to Jo Muldoon, knocking my apples this way and that way. (*Begins arranging them.*) Showing off he was to the new magistrate.

[*Enter Bartley Fallon and Mrs. Fallon.*

*Bartley.* Indeed it's a poor country and a scarce country to be living in at all. But I'm thinking if I went to America it's long ago the day I'd be dead !

*Mrs. Fallon.* So you might, indeed.

[*She puts her basket on a barrel and begins putting parcels in it, taking them from under her cloak.*

*Bartley.* And it's a great expense for a poor man to be buried in America.

*Mrs. Fallon.* Never fear, Bartley Fallon, but I'll give you a good burying the day you'll die.

*Bartley.* Maybe it's yourself will be buried in the graveyard of Cloonmara before me, Mary Fallon, and I myself that will be dying unbeknownst some night, and no one a-near me. And the cat itself may be gone straying through the country, and the mice squealing over the quilt.



*Mrs. Fallon.* Leave off talking of dying. It might be twenty years you'll be living yet.

*Bartley (with a deep sigh).* I'm thinking if I'll be living at the end of twenty years, it's a very old man I'll be then !

*Mrs. Tarpey (turns and sees them).* Good morrow, Bartley Fallon ; good morrow, Mrs. Fallon. Well, Bartley, you'll find no cause for complaining to-day ; they are all saying it was a good fair.

*Bartley (raising his voice).* It was not a good fair, Mrs. Tarpey. It was a scattered sort of a fair. If we didn't expect more, we got less. That's the way with me always ; whatever I have to sell goes down and whatever I have to buy goes up. If there's ever any misfortune coming to this world, it's on myself it pitches, like a flock of crows on seed potatoes.

*Mrs. Fallon.* Leave off talking of misfortunes, and listen to Jack Smith that is coming the way, and he singing. [*Voice of Jack Smith heard singing :*

I thought, my first love,

There'd be but one house between you and me,  
And I thought I would find

Yourself coaxing my child on your knee.  
Over the tide

I would leap with the leap of a swan,  
Till I came to the side

Of the wife of the Red-haired man !

[*Jack Smith comes in ; he is a red-haired man,  
and is carrying a hayfork.*

*Mrs. Tarpey.* That should be a good song if I had my hearing.

*Mrs. Fallon (shouting).* It's "The Red-haired Man's Wife."

*Mrs. Tarpey.* I know it well. That's the song that has the skin on it!

*[She turns her back to them and goes on arranging her apples.]*

*Mrs. Fallon.* Where's herself, Jack Smith?

*Jack Smith.* She was delayed with her washing; bleaching the clothes on the hedge she is, and she daren't leave them, with all the tinkers that do be passing to the fair. It isn't to the fair I came myself, but up to the Five Acre Meadow I'm going, where I have a contract for the hay. We'll get a share of it into tramps to-day. *(He lays down hayfork and lights his pipe.)*

*Bartley.* You will not get it into tramps to-day. The rain will be down on it by evening, and on myself too. It's seldom I ever started on a journey but the rain would come down on me before I'd find any place of shelter.

*Jack Smith.* If it didn't itself, Bartley, it is my belief you would carry a leaky pail on your head in place of a hat, the way you'd not be without some cause of complaining.

*[A voice heard "Go on, now, go on out o' that. Go on I say."]*

*Jack Smith.* Look at that young mare of Pat Ryan's that is backing into Shaughnessy's bullocks with the dint of the crowd! Don't be daunted, Pat, I'll give you a hand with her.

*[He goes out, leaving his hayfork.]*

*Mrs. Fallon.* It's time for ourselves to be going home. I have all I got put in the basket. Look at there, Jack Smith's hayfork he left behind him! He'll be wanting it. (*Calls*) Jack Smith! Jack Smith!—He's gone through the crowd—hurry after him, Bartley, he'll be wanting it.

*Bartley.* I'll do that. This is no safe place to be leaving it. (*He takes up fork awkwardly and upsets the basket.*) Look at that now! If there is any basket in the fair upset, it must be our own basket!

[*He goes out to right.*]

*Mrs. Fallon.* Get out of that! It is your own fault it is. Talk of misfortunes and misfortunes will come. Glory be! Look at my new egg-cups rolling in every part—and my two pound of sugar with the paper broke—

*Mrs. Tarpey (turning from stall).* God help us, Mrs. Fallon, what happened your basket?

*Mrs. Fallon.* It's himself that knocked it down, bad manners to him. (*Putting things up.*) My grand sugar that's destroyed, and he'll not drink his tea without it. I had best go back to the shop for more, much good may it do him!

[*Enter Tim Casey.*]

*Tim Casey.* Where is Bartley Fallon, Mrs. Fallon? I want a word with him before he'll leave the fair. I was afraid he might have gone home by this, for he's a temperate man.

*Mrs. Fallon.* I wish he did go home! It'd be best for me if he went home straight from the fair green, or if he never came with me at all! Where



is he, is it? He's gone up the road (*jerks elbow*) following Jack Smith with a hayfork.

[*She goes out to left.*]

*Tim Casey.* Following Jack Smith with a hayfork! Did ever any one hear the like of that. (*Shouts.*) Did you hear that news, Mrs. Tarpey?

*Mrs. Tarpey.* I heard no news at all.

*Tim Casey.* Some dispute I suppose it was that rose between Jack Smith and Bartley Fallon, and it seems Jack made off, and Bartley Fallon is following him with a hayfork!

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Is he now? Well, that was quick work! It's not ten minutes since the two of them were here, Bartley going home and Jack going to the Five Acre Meadow; and I had my apples to settle up, that Jo Muldoon of the police had scattered, and when I looked around again, Jack Smith was gone, and Bartley Fallon was gone, and Mrs. Fallon's basket upset, and all in it strewed upon the ground—the tea here—the two pound of sugar there—the egg-cups there—Look now what a great hardship the deafness puts upon me, that I didn't hear the commencement of the fight! Wait till I tell James Ryan that I see below, he is a neighbour of Bartley's, it would be a pity if he wouldn't hear the news!

[*She goes out. Enter Shawn Early and Mrs. Tully.*]

*Tim Casey.* Listen Shawn Early! Listen Mrs. Tully to the news! Jack Smith and Bartley Fallon had a falling out, and Jack knocked Mrs. Fallon's

basket into the road, and Bartley made an attack on him with a hayfork, and away with Jack, and Bartley after him. Look at the sugar here yet on the road!

*Shawn Early.* Do you tell me so! Well, that's a queer thing, and Bartley Fallon so quiet a man!

*Mrs. Tully.* I wouldn't wonder at all. I would never think well of a man that would have that sort of a mouldering look. It's likely he has overtaken Jack by this. [*Enter James Ryan and Mrs Tarpey.*

*James Ryan.* That is great news Mrs. Tarpey was telling me! I suppose that's what brought the police and the magistrate up this way. I was wondering to see them in it a while ago.

*Shawn Early.* The police after them? Bartley Fallon must have injured Jack so. They wouldn't meddle in a fight that was only for show!

*Mrs. Tully.* Why wouldn't he injure him? There was many a man killed with no more of a weapon than a hayfork.

*James Ryan.* Wait till I run north as far as Kelly's bar to spread the news! [*He goes out.*

*Tim Casey.* I'll go tell Jack Smith's first cousin that is standing there south of the church after selling his lambs. [*Goes out.*

*Mrs. Tully.* I'll go telling a few of the neighbours I see beyond to the west. [*Goes out.*

*Shawn Early.* I'll give word of it beyond at the east of the green.

[*Is going out when Mrs. Tarpey seizes hold of him.*

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Stop a minute, Shawn Early, and tell me did you see red Jack Smith's wife, Kitty Keary, in any place?

*Shawn Early.* I did. At her own house she was, drying clothes on the hedge as I passed.

*Mrs. Tarpey.* What did you say she was doing?

*Shawn Early (breaking away).* Laying out a sheet on the hedge. [He goes.

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Laying out a sheet for the dead! The Lord have mercy on us! Jack Smith dead, and his wife laying out a sheet for his burying! (*Calls out.*) Why didn't you tell me that before, Shawn Early? Isn't the deafness the great hardship? Half the world might be dead without me knowing of it or getting word of it at all! (*She sits down and rocks herself.*) O my poor Jack Smith! To be going to his work so nice and so hearty, and to be left stretched on the ground in the full light of the day!

[Enter Tim Casey.

*Tim Casey.* What is it, Mrs Tarpey? What happened since?

*Mrs. Tarpey.* O my poor Jack Smith!

*Tim Casey.* Did Bartley overtake him?

*Mrs. Tarpey.* O the poor man!

*Tim Casey.* Is it killed he is?

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Stretched in the Five Acre Meadow!

*Tim Casey.* The Lord have mercy on us, is that a fact?

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Without the rites of the Church or a ha'porth!



*Tim Casey.* Who was telling you?

*Mrs. Tarpey.* And the wife laying out a sheet for his corpse. (*Sits up and wipes her eyes.*) I suppose they'll wake him the same as another?

[*Enter Mrs. Tully, Shawn Early, and James Ryan.*]

*Mrs. Tully.* There is great talk about this work in every quarter of the fair.

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Ochone! cold and dead. And myself maybe the last he was speaking to!

*James Ryan.* The Lord save us! Is it dead he is?

*Tim Casey.* Dead surely, and the wife getting provision for the wake.

*Shawn Early.* Well now, hadn't Bartley Fallon great venom in him?

*Mrs. Tully.* You may be sure he had some cause. Would he have made an end of him if he had not? (*To Mrs. Tarpey, raising her voice.*) What was it rose the dispute at all, Mrs. Tarpey?

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Not a one of me knows. The last I saw of them, Jack Smith was standing there, and Bartley Fallon was standing there, quiet and easy, and he listening to "The Red-haired Man's Wife."

*Mrs. Tully.* Do you hear that, Shawn Early? Do you hear that, Tim Casey and James Ryan? Bartley Fallon was here this morning listening to red Jack Smith's wife, Kitty Keary that was! Listening to her and whispering with her! It was she started the fight so!

*Shawn Early.* She must have followed him from her own house. It is likely some person roused him.

*Tim Casey.* I never knew, now, Bartley Fallon was great with Jack Smith's wife.

*Mrs. Tully.* How would you know it? Sure it's not in the streets they would be calling it. If Mrs. Fallon didn't know of it, and if I that have the next house to them didn't know of it, and if Jack Smith himself didn't know of it, it is not likely you would know of it, Tim Casey.

*Shawn Early.* Let Bartley Fallon take charge of her from this out so, and let him provide for her. It is little pity she will get from any person in this parish.

*Tim Casey.* How can he take charge of her? Sure he has a wife of his own. Sure you don't think he'd turn souper and marry her in a Protestant church?

*James Ryan.* It would be easy for him to marry her if he brought her to America.

*Shawn Early.* With or without Kitty Keary, believe me it is for America he's making at this minute. I saw the new magistrate and Jo Muldoon of the police going into the post-office as I came up—there was hurry on them—you may be sure it was to telegraph they went, the way he'll be stopped in the docks at Queenstown!

*Mrs. Tully.* It's likely Kitty Keary is gone with him, and not minding a sheet or a wake at all. The poor man, to be deserted by his own wife, and the breath hardly gone out yet from his body that is lying bloody in the field! [Enter Mrs. Fallon.

*Mrs. Fallon.* What is it the whole of the town is talking about? And what is it you yourselves are talking about? Is it about my man Bartley Fallon you are talking? Is it lies about him you are telling, saying that he went killing Jack Smith? My grief that ever he came into this place at all!

*James Ryan.* Be easy now, Mrs. Fallon. Sure there is no one at all in the whole fair but is sorry for you!

*Mrs. Fallon.* Sorry for me, is it? Why would anyone be sorry for me? Let you be sorry for yourselves, and that there may be shame on you for ever and at the day of judgment, for the words you are saying and the lies you are telling to take away the character of my poor man, and to take the good name off of him, and to drive him to destruction! That is what you are doing!

*Shawn Early.* Take comfort now, Mrs. Fallon. The police are not so smart as they think. Sure he might give them the slip yet, the same as Lynchehaun.

*Mrs. Tully.* If they do get him, and if they do put a rope around his neck, there is no one can say he does not deserve it!

*Mrs. Fallon.* Is that what you are saying, Bridget Tully, and is that what you think? I tell you it's too much talk you have, making yourself out to be such a great one, and to be running down every respectable person! A rope is it? It isn't much of a rope was needed to tie up your own furniture the day you came



into Martin Tully's house, and you never bringing as much as a blanket, or a penny, or a suit of clothes with you, and I myself bringing seventy pounds and two feather beds. And now you are stiffer than a woman would have a hundred pounds ! It is too much talk the whole of you have. A rope is it ? I tell you the whole of this town is full of liars and schemers that would hang you up for half a glass of whiskey. (*Turning to go.*) People they are you wouldn't believe as much as daylight from without you'd get up to have a look at it yourself. Killing Jack Smith, indeed ! Where are you at all, Bartley, till I bring you out of this ? My nice, quiet little man ! My decent comrade ! He that is as kind and as harmless as an innocent beast of the field ! He'll be doing no harm at all if he'll shed the blood of some of you after this day's work ! That much would be no harm at all. (*Calls out.*) Bartley ! Bartley Fallon ! Where are you ? (*Going out.*) Did anyone see Bartley Fallon ?  
[*All turn to look after her.*]

*James Ryan.* It is hard for her to believe any such a thing, God help her !

[*Enter Bartley Fallon from right, carrying hayfork.*]

*Bartley.* It is what I often said to myself, if there is ever any misfortune coming to this world, it is on myself it is sure to fall !

[*All turn round and face him.*]

*Bartley.* To be going about with this fork, and to find no one to take it, and no place to leave it down,

and I wanting to be gone out of this.—Is that you, Shawn Early? (*Holds out fork.*) It's well I met you. You have no call to be leaving the fair for a while the way I have, and how can I go till I'm rid of this fork? Will you take it and keep it until such time as Jack Smith——

*James Ryan (taking off hat).* The Lord have mercy on him.

*Shawn Early (backing).* I will not take it, Bartley Fallon, I'm very thankful to you!

*Bartley (turning to apple stall).* Look at it now, Mrs. Tarpey, it was here I got it; let me thrust it under the stall. It will lie there safe enough, and no one will take notice of it until such time as Jack Smith——

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Take your fork out of that! Is it to put trouble on me and to destroy me you want? putting it there for the police to be rooting it out maybe. [*Thrusts him back.*]

*Bartley.* That is a very unneighbourly thing for you to do, Mrs. Tarpey. Hadn't I enough care on me with that fork before this, running up and down with it like the swinging of a clock, and afeard to lay it down in any place. I wish I never touched it or meddled with it at all!

*James Ryan.* It is a pity, indeed, you ever did.

*Bartley.* Will you yourself take it, James Ryan? You were always a neighbourly man.

*James Ryan (backing).* There is many a thing I would do for you, Bartley Fallon, but I won't do that!

*Shawn Early.* I tell you there is no man will give you any help or any encouragement for this day's work. If it was something agrarian now——

*Bartley.* If no one at all will take it, maybe it's best to give it up to the police.

*Tim Casey.* There'd be a welcome for it with them, surely! (*Laughter*).

*Mrs. Tully.* And it is to the police Kitty Keary herself will be brought.

*Mrs. Tarpey (rocking to and fro).* I wonder now who will take the expense of the wake for poor Jack Smith!

*Bartley.* The wake for Jack Smith!

*Tim Casey.* Why wouldn't he get a wake as well as another? Would you begrudge him that much?

*Bartley.* Red Jack Smith! Who was telling you he was dead?

*Shawn Early.* The whole town knows of it by this.

*Bartley.* Do they say what way did he die?

*James Ryan.* You don't know that yourself, Bartley Fallon? You don't know he was followed and that he was laid dead with the stab of a hayfork?

*Bartley.* The stab of a hayfork!

*Shawn Early.* You don't know, I suppose, that the body was found in the Five Acre Meadow?

*Bartley.* The Five Acre Meadow!

*Tim Casey.* It is likely you don't know that the police are after the man that did it?



*Bartley.* The man that did it !

*Mrs. Tully.* You don't know, maybe, that he was made away with for the sake of Kitty Keary, his wife ?

*Bartley.* Kitty Keary, his wife !

[*Sits down bewildered.*]

*Mrs. Tully.* And what have you to say now, Bartley Fallon ?

*Bartley (crossing himself).* I to bring that fork here, and to find that news before me ! It is much if I can ever stir from this place at all, or reach as far as the road !

*Tim Casey.* Look, boys, at the magistrate, and Jo Muldoon along with him ! It's best for us to quit this.

*Shawn Early.* That is so. It is best not to be mixed in this business at all.

*James Ryan.* Bad as he is, I wouldn't like to be an informer against any man.

[*All hurry away except Mrs. Tarpey, who remains behind her stall. Enter magistrate and policeman.*]

*Magistrate.* I knew the district was in a bad state, but I did not expect to be confronted with a murder at the first fair I came to.

*Policeman.* I am sure you did not, indeed.

*Magistrate.* It was well I had not gone home. I caught a few words here and there that roused my suspicions.

*Policeman.* So they would, too.

*Magistrate.* You heard the same story from everyone you asked ?

*Policeman.* The same story—or if it was not altogether the same, anyway it was no less than the first story.

*Magistrate.* What is that man doing ? He is sitting alone with a hayfork. He has a guilty look. The murder was done with a hayfork !

*Policeman (in a whisper).* That's the very man, they say, did the act ; Bartley Fallon himself !

*Magistrate.* He must have found escape difficult—he is trying to brazen it out. A convict in the Andaman Islands tried the same game, but he could not escape my system ! Stand aside—— Don't go far——have the handcuffs ready. (*He walks up to Bartley, folds his arms, and stands before him.*) Here, my man, do you know anything of John Smith ?

*Bartley.* Of John Smith ! Who is he, now ?

*Policeman.* Jack Smith, Sir—— Red Jack Smith !

*Magistrate (coming a step nearer and tapping him on the shoulder).* Where is Jack Smith ?

*Bartley (with a deep sigh, and shaking his head slowly).* Where is he, indeed ?

*Magistrate.* What have you to tell ?

*Bartley.* It is where he was this morning, standing in this spot, singing his share of songs—no, but lighting his pipe—scraping a match on the sole of his shoe——

*Magistrate.* I ask you, for the third time, where is he ?

*Bartley.* I wouldn't like to say that. It is a great mystery, and it is hard to say of any man, did he earn hatred or love.

*Magistrate.* Tell me all you know.

*Bartley.* All that I know—— Well, there are the three estates; there is Limbo, and there is Purgatory, and there is——

*Magistrate.* Nonsense! This is trifling! Get to the point.

*Bartley.* Maybe you don't hold with the clergy so? That is the teaching of the clergy. Maybe you hold with the old people. It is what they do be saying, that the shadow goes wandering, and the soul is tired, and the body is taking a rest—— The shadow! (*starts up*). I was nearly sure I saw Jack Smith not ten minutes ago at the corner of the forge and I lost him again—— Was it his ghost I saw, do you think?

*Magistrate (to policeman).* Conscience-struck! He will confess all now!

*Bartley.* His ghost to come before me! It is likely it was on account of the fork! I to have it and he to have no way to defend himself the time he met with his death!

*Magistrate (to policeman).* I must note down his words (*takes out notebook*). (*To Bartley*) I warn you that your words are being noted.

*Bartley.* If I had ha' run faster in the beginning, this terror would not be on me at the latter end!



Maybe he will cast it up against me at the day of judgment—— I wouldn't wonder at all at that.

*Magistrate (writing).* At the day of judgment

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*Bartley.* It was soon for his ghost to appear to me——is it coming after me always by day it will be, and stripping the clothes off my bed in the night time?—— I wouldn't wonder at that, being as I am an unfortunate man!

*Magistrate (sternly).* Tell me this truly. What was the motive of this crime?

*Bartley.* The motive, is it?

*Magistrate.* Yes; the motive; the cause.

*Bartley.* I'd sooner not say that.

*Magistrate.* You had better tell me truly. Was it money?

*Bartley.* Not at all! What did poor Jack Smith ever have in his pockets unless it might be his hands that would be in them?

*Magistrate.* Any dispute about land?

*Bartley (indignantly).* Not at all! He never was a grabber or grabbed from anyone!

*Magistrate.* You will find it better for you if you tell me at once.

*Bartley.* I tell you I wouldn't for the whole world wish to say what it was——it is a thing I would not like to be talking about.

*Magistrate.* There is no use in hiding it. It will be discovered in the end.

*Bartley.* Well, I suppose it will, seeing that mostly

everybody knows it before. Whisper here now. I will tell no lie ; where would be the use ? (*Puts his hand to his mouth, and Magistrate stoops.*) Don't be putting the blame on the parish, for such a thing was never done in the parish before—it was done for the sake of Kitty Keary, Jack Smith's wife.

*Magistrate (to policeman).* Put on the handcuffs. We have been saved some trouble. I knew he would confess if taken in the right way.

[*Policeman puts on handcuffs.*]

*Bartley.* Handcuffs now ! Glory be ! I always said, if there was ever any misfortune coming to this place, it was on myself it would fall. I to be in handcuffs ! There's no wonder at all in that.

[*Enter Mrs. Fallon, followed by the rest. She is looking back at them as she speaks.*]

*Mrs. Fallon.* Telling lies the whole of the people of this town are ; telling lies, telling lies as fast as a dog will trot ! Speaking against my poor respectable man ! Saying he made an end of Jack Smith ! I'm nearly sure I saw Jack Smith a while ago coming down by the gap. My decent comrade ! There is no better man and no kinder man in the whole of the five parishes ! It's little annoyance he ever gave to anyone ! (*Turns and sees him.*) What in the earthly world do I see before me ? Bartley Fallon in charge of the police ! Handcuffs on him ! O Bartley, what did you do at all at all ?

*Bartley.* O Mary, there has a great misfortune

come upon me! It is what I always said, that if there is ever any misfortune——

*Mrs. Fallon.* What did he do at all, or is it bewitched I am?

*Magistrate.* This man has been arrested on a charge of murder.

*Mrs. Fallon.* Whose charge is that? Don't believe them! They are all liars in this place! Give me back my man!

*Magistrate.* It is natural you should take his part, but you have no cause of complaint against your neighbours. He has been arrested for the murder of John Smith, on his own confession.

*Mrs. Fallon.* The saints of heaven protect us! And what did he want killing Jack Smith?

*Magistrate.* It is best you should know all. He did it on account of a love affair with the murdered man's wife.

*Mrs. Fallon (sitting down).* With Jack Smith's wife! With Kitty Keary!——Ochone, the traitor!

*The Crowd.* A great shame, indeed. He is a traitor, indeed.

*Mrs. Tully.* To America he was bringing her, Mrs. Fallon.

*Bartley.* What are you saying, Mary? I tell you——

*Mrs. Fallon.* Don't say a word! I won't listen to any word you'll say! (*Stops her ears.*) O, isn't he the treacherous villain? Ohone go deo!

*Bartley.* Be quiet till I speak! Listen to what I say!



*Mrs. Fallon.* Sitting beside me on the ass car coming to the town, so quiet and so respectable, and treachery like that in his heart !

*Bartley.* Is it your wits you have lost or is it I myself that have lost my wits ?

*Mrs. Fallon.* And it's hard I earned you, slaving, slaving—and you grumbling, and sighing, and coughing, and discontented, and the priest wore out anointing you, with all the times you threatened to die !

*Bartley.* Let you be quiet till I tell you !

*Mrs. Fallon.* You to bring such a disgrace into the parish ! A thing that was never heard of before !

*Bartley.* Will you shut your mouth and hear me speaking ?

*Mrs. Fallon.* And if it was for any sort of a fine handsome woman, but for a little fistful of a woman like Kitty Keary, that's not four feet high hardly, and not three teeth in her head unless she got new ones ! May God reward you, Bartley Fallon, for the black treachery in your heart and the wickedness in your mind, and the red blood of poor Jack Smith that is wet upon your hand !

[*Voice of Jack Smith heard singing :*

The sea shall be dry,

The earth under mourning and ban !

Then loud shall he cry

For the Wife of the Red-haired man !

*Bartley.* It's Jack Smith's voice—I never knew

a ghost to sing before——. It is after myself and the fork he is coming! (*Goes back. Enter Jack Smith.*) Let one of you give him the fork and I will be clear of him now and for eternity!

*Mrs. Tarpey.* The Lord have mercy on us! Red Jack Smith! The man that was going to be waked!

*James Ryan.* Is it back from the grave you are come?

*Magistrate.* What is this? There seems to be something wrong!

*Policeman.* There does so.

*Shawn Early.* Is it alive you are, or is it dead? you are?

*Tim Casey.* Is it yourself at all that's in it?

*Mrs. Tully.* Is it letting on you were to be dead?

*Mrs. Fallon.* Dead or alive, let you stop Kitty Keary, your wife, from bringing my man away with her to America!

*Jack Smith.* It is what I think, the wits are gone astray on the whole of you. What would my wife want bringing Bartley Fallon to America?

*Mrs. Fallon.* To leave yourself, and to get quit of you she wanted, Jack Smith, and to bring him away from myself. That's what the two of them had settled together.

*Jack Smith.* I'll break the head of any man that says that! Who is it says it? (*To Tim Casey.*) Was it you said it? (*To Shawn Early.*) Was it you?

*All together (backing and shaking their heads). It wasn't I said it!*

*Jack Smith.* Tell me the name of any man that said it!

*All together (pointing to Bartley). It was him that said it!*

*Jack Smith.* Let me at him till I break his head!

*[Bartley backs in terror. Neighbours hold Jack Smith back.]*

*Jack Smith (trying to free himself).* Let me at him! I'll give him something more to think of than tempting my wife away from me to America! To leave me and go with Bartley Fallon! Bartley Fallon! A pleasant sort of a scarecrow to be crossing the ocean with! It's back from the docks of New York he'd be turned! It's likely indeed they'd let the likes of him land, being as he is, without means, without store, without teeth (*trying to rush at him again*), without wit, without strength, but with a lie in his mouth and treachery in his heart, and another man's wife by his side and he passing her off as his own! *[Makes another rush, but is held back.]*

*Magistrate (pointing to Jack Smith).* Policeman, put the handcuffs on this man. I see it all now. A case of false impersonation, a conspiracy to defeat the ends of justice. There was a case in the Andaman Islands, a murderer of the Mopsa tribe, a religious enthusiast——

*Policeman.* So he might be, too.

*Magistrate.* We must take both these men to the



scene of the murder. We must confront them with the body of the real Jack Smith.

*Jack Smith.* I'll break the head of any man that will find my dead body!

*Magistrate.* Call more help from the barracks.  
(*Policeman whistles.*)

*Bartley.* It is what I am thinking, if myself and Jack Smith are put together in the one cell for the night, the handcuffs will be taken off of him, and his hands will be free, and murder will be done that time surely!

*Mrs. Tully.* To have put a prod of a fork through Jack Smith, and left him stretched in the meadow, and to have set his ghost wandering, and to have coaxed away Kitty Keary to America! Well now, wasn't Bartley Fallon a very boastful man to say he did all that!

*Magistrate.* Come on! [ *They turn to the right.*



THE RISING OF THE MOON.



## PERSONS.

POLICEMAN X.

POLICEMAN Z.

POLICEMAN B.

BALLAD-SINGER.

## THE RISING OF THE MOON.

SCENE : *Side of a quay in a seaport town. Some posts and chains. A large barrel. Enter three policemen. Moonlight.*

*[Policeman Z, who is older than the others, crosses the stage to right and looks down steps. The others put down a pastepot and unroll a bundle of placards.*

*Policeman B.* I think this would be a good place to put up a notice. *[He points to barrel.*

*Policeman X.* Better ask him. *(Calls to Z.)*  
Will this be a good place for a placard?

*[No answer.*

*Policeman B.* Will we put up a notice here on the barrel ? *[No answer.*

*Policeman Z.* There's a flight of steps here that leads to the water. This is a place that should be minded well. If he got down here his friends might have a boat to meet him ; they might send it in here from outside.

*Policeman B.* Would the barrel be a good place to put a notice up ?

*Policeman Z.* It might ; you can put it there.

*[They paste the notice up.*

*Policeman Z (reading it).* Dark hair—dark eyes, smooth face, height five feet five—there's not much to take hold of in that—It's a pity I had no chance of seeing him before he broke out of gaol. They say he's a wonder, that it's he makes all the plans for the whole organization. There isn't another man in Ireland would have broken gaol the way he did. He must have some friends among the gaolers.

*Policeman B.* A hundred pounds is little enough for the Government to offer for him. You may be sure any man in the force that takes him will get promotion.

*Policeman Z.* I'll mind this place myself. I wouldn't wonder at all if he came this way. He might come slipping along there (*points to side of quay*), and his friends might be waiting for him there (*points down steps*), and once he got away it's little chance we'd have of finding him; it's maybe under a load of kelp he'd be in a fishing boat, and not one to help a married man that wants it to the reward.

*Policeman X.* And if we get him itself, nothing but abuse on our heads for it from the people, and maybe from our own relations.

*Policeman Z.* Well, we have to do our duty in the force. Haven't we the whole country depending on us to keep law and order? It's those that are down would be up and those that are up would be down, if it wasn't for us. Well, hurry on, you have plenty of other places to placard yet, and come back here then to me. You can take the lantern. Don't



be too long now. It's very lonesome here with nothing to be looking at but the moon.

*Policeman B.* It's a pity we can't stop with you. The Government should have brought more police into the town, with *him* in gaol, and at assize time too. Well, good luck to your watch. [*They go out.*]

*Policeman Z* (*walks up and down once or twice and looks at placard*). A hundred pounds and promotion sure. There must be a great deal of spending in a hundred pounds. It's a pity some honest man not to be the better of that.

[*A ragged man appears at left and tries to slip past. Policeman Z suddenly turns.*]

*Policeman Z.* Where are you going?

*Man.* I'm a poor ballad-singer, your honour. I thought to sell some of these (*holds out bundle of ballads*) to the sailors. [*He goes on.*]

*Policeman Z.* Stop! Didn't I tell you to stop? You can't go on there.

*Man.* Oh, very well. It's a hard thing to be poor. All the world's against the poor.

*Policeman Z.* Who are you?

*Man.* You'd be as wise as myself if I told you, but I don't mind. I'm one Jimmy Walsh, a ballad-singer.

*Policeman Z.* Jimmy Walsh? I don't know that name.

*Man.* Ah sure, they know it well enough in Ennis. Were you ever in Ennis, sergeant?

*Policeman Z.* What brought you here?

*Man.* Sure, it's to the assizes I came, thinking I

might make a few shillings here or there. It's in the one train with the judges I came.

*Policeman Z.* Well, if you came so far you may as well go farther, for you 'll walk out of this.

*Man.* I will, I will ; I'll just go on where I was going. [*Goes towards steps.*]

*Policeman Z.* Come back from those steps ; no one has leave to pass down them to-night.

*Man.* I'll just sit on the top of the steps till I see will some sailor buy a ballad off me that would give me my supper. They do be late going back to the ship. It's often I saw them in Cork carried down the quay in a hand-cart.

*Policeman Z.* Move on, I tell you. I won't have anyone lingering about the quay to-night.

*Man.* Well, I'll go. It's the poor have the hard life ! Maybe yourself might like one, sergeant. Here's a good sheet now. (*Turns one over.*) "Content and a pipe"—that's not much. "Johnny Hart"—that's a lovely song.

*Policeman Z.* Move on.

*Man.* Ah, wait till you hear it. (*Sings*)—

There was a rich farmer's daughter lived near  
the town of Ross ;

She courted a Highland soldier, his name was  
Johnny Hart ;

Says the mother to her daughter, "I'll go  
distracted mad

If you marry that Highland soldier dressed up  
in Highland plaid.

*Policeman Z.* Stop that noise.

[*Man wraps up his ballads and shuffles towards the steps.*]

*Policeman Z.* Where are you going?

*Man.* Sure you told me to be going, and I am going.

*Policeman Z.* Don't be a fool. I didn't tell you to go that way; I told you to go back to the town.

*Man.* Back to the town, is it?

*Policeman Z* (*taking him by the shoulder and shoving him before him*). Here, I'll show you the way. Be off with you. What are you stopping for?

*Man* (*who has been keeping his eye on the notice, points to it*). I think I know what you're waiting for, sergeant.

*Policeman Z.* What's that to you?

*Man.* And I know well the man you're waiting for—I know him well—I'll be going. [*He shuffles on.*]

*Policeman Z.* You know him? Come back here. What sort is he?

*Man.* Come back is it, sergeant? Do you want to have me killed?

*Policeman Z.* Why do you say that?

*Man.* Never mind. I'm going. I wouldn't be in your shoes if the reward was ten times as much. (*Goes on off stage to left.*) Not if it was ten times as much.

*Policeman Z* (*rushing after him*). Come back here, come back. (*Drags him back.*) What sort is he? Where did you see him?



*Man.* I saw him in my own place, in the County Clare. I tell you you wouldn't like to be looking at him. You'd be afraid to be in the one place with him. There isn't a weapon he doesn't know the use of, and as to strength, his muscles are as hard as that board (*slaps barrel*).

*Policeman Z.* Is he as bad as that?

*Man.* He is then.

*Policeman Z.* Do you tell me so?

*Man.* There was a poor man in our place, a sergeant from Ballyvaughan.—It was with a lump of stone he did it.

*Policeman Z.* I never heard of that.

*Man.* And you wouldn't, sergeant. It's not everything that happens gets into the papers. And there was a policeman in plain clothes, too. . . It is in Limerick he was. . . It was after the time of the attack on the police barrack at Kilmallock. . . Moonlight. . . just like this . . . waterside. . . Nothing was known for certain.

*Policeman Z.* Do you say so? It's a terrible country to belong to.

*Man.* That's so, indeed! You might be standing there, looking out that way, thinking you saw him coming up this side of the quay (*points*), and he might be coming up this other side (*points*), and he'd be on you before you knew where you were.

*Policeman Z.* It's a whole troop of police they ought to put here to stop a man like that.

*Man.* But if you'd like me to stop with you I

could be looking down this side. I could be sitting up here on this barrel.

*Policeman Z.* And you know him well, too?

*Man.* I'd know him a mile off, sergeant.

*Policeman Z.* But you wouldn't want to share the reward?

*Man.* Is it a poor man like me, that has to be going the roads and singing in fairs, to have the name on him that he took a reward? But you don't want me. I'll be safer in the town.

*Policeman Z.* Well, you can stop.

*Man (getting up on barrel).* All right, sergeant. I wonder, now, you're not tired out, sergeant, walking up and down the way you are.

*Policeman Z.* If I'm tired I'm used to it.

*Man.* You might have hard work before you to-night yet. Take it easy while you can. There's plenty of room up here on the barrel, and you see farther when you're higher up.

*Policeman Z.* Maybe so. (*Gets up beside him on barrel, facing right. They sit back to back, looking different ways.*) You made me feel a bit queer with the way you talked.

*Man.* Give me a bit of 'baccy, sergeant (*he gives it, and Man lights pipe*); smoke yourself, sergeant? It'll settle you down. Wait now till I give you a light, but you needn't turn round. Don't take your eye off the quay for the life of you.

*Policeman Z.* Never fear, I won't. (*Lights pipe. They both smoke.*) Indeed it's a hard thing to be in

the force, out at night and no thanks for it, for all the danger we're in. And it's little we get but abuse from the people, and no choice but to obey our orders, and never asked when a man is sent into danger, if you are a married man with a family.

*Man (sings)—*

As through the hills I walked to view the hills  
and shamrock plain,

I stood awhile where nature smiles to view the  
rocks and streams,

On a matron I fixed my eyes beneath a fertile  
vale,

As she sang her song it was on the wrong of poor  
old Granuaile.

*Policeman Z.* Stop that ; that's no song to be singing in these times.

*Man.* Ah, sergeant, I was only singing to keep my heart up. It sinks when I think of him. To think of us two sitting here, and he creeping up the quay, maybe, to get to us.

*Policeman Z.* Are you keeping a good look-out ?

*Man.* I am ; and for no reward too. Amn't I the foolish man ? But when I saw a man in trouble, I never could help trying to get him out of it. What's that ? Did something hit me ? [*Rubs his heart.*]

*Policeman Z (patting him on the shoulder).* You will get your reward in heaven.

*Man.* I know that, I know that, sergeant, but life is precious.



*Policeman.* Well, you can sing if it gives you more courage.

*Man (sings)*—

Her head was bare, her hands and feet with iron  
bands were bound,  
Her pensive strain and plaintive wail mingles  
with the evening gale,  
And the song she sang with mournful air, I am  
old Granuaile,  
Her lips so sweet that monarchs kissed . . .

*Policeman Z.* That's not it. . . . "Her gown she wore was stained with gore." . . . That's it—you missed it.

*Man.* You're right, sergeant, so it is ; I missed it. (*Repeats line.*) But to think of a man like you knowing a song like that.

*Policeman Z.* There's many a thing a man knows and has no wish for.

*Man.* Now, I daresay, sergeant, in your youth, you used to be sitting up on a wall, the way you are sitting up on this barrel now, and the other lads beside you, and you singing "Granuaile"? . . .

*Policeman Z.* I did then.

*Man.* And the "Shan Bhean Bocht"? . . .

*Policeman Z.* I did then.

*Man.* And the "Green on the Cape"? . . .

*Policeman Z.* That was one of them.

*Man.* And maybe the man you are watching for to-night used to be sitting on the wall, when he was

young, and singing those same songs. . . . It's a queer world. . . .

*Policeman Z.* Whisht! . . . I think I see something coming. . . . It's only a dog.

*Man.* And isn't it a queer world? . . . Maybe it's one of the boys you used to be singing with that time you will be arresting to-day or to-morrow, and sending into the dock. . . .

*Policeman Z.* That's true indeed.

*Man.* And maybe one night, after you had been singing, if the other boys had told you some plan they had, some plan to free the country, you might have joined with them. . . . and maybe it is you might be in trouble now.

*Policeman Z.* Well, who knows but I might? I had a great spirit in those days.

*Man.* It's a queer world, sergeant, and it's little any mother knows when she sees her child creeping on the floor what might happen to it before it has gone through its life, or who will be who in the end.

*Policeman Z.* That's a queer thought now, and a true thought. Wait now till I think it out . . . If it wasn't for the sense I have, and for my wife and family, and for me joining the force the time I did, it might be myself now would be after breaking gaol and hiding in the dark, and it might be him that's hiding in the dark and that got out of gaol would be sitting up where I am on this barrel. . . . And it might be myself would be creeping up trying to make my escape from himself, and it might be himself would be

keeping the law, and myself would be breaking it, and myself would be trying maybe to put a bullet in his head, or to take up a lump of stone the way you said he did . . . no, that myself did . . . Oh! (*Gasps. After a pause.*) What's that? (*Grasps man's arm.*)

*Man* (*jumps off barrel and listens, looking out over water*). It's nothing, sergeant.

*Policeman Z.* I thought it might be a boat. I had a notion there might be friends of his coming about the quays with a boat.

*Man.* Sergeant, I am thinking it was with the people you were, and not with the law you were, when you were a young man.

*Policeman Z.* Well, if I was, I was foolish then. That time's gone.

*Man.* Maybe, sergeant, it comes into your head sometimes, in spite of your belt and your tunic, that it might have been as well for you to have followed Granuaile.

*Policeman Z.* It's no business of yours what I think.

*Man.* Maybe, sergeant, you'll be on the side of the country yet.

*Policeman Z* (*gets off barrel*). Don't talk to me like that. I have my duties and I know them. (*Looks round.*) That was a boat; I hear the oars.

[*Goes to the steps and looks down.*]

*Man* (*sings*)—

O, then, tell me Shawn O'Farrel

Where the gathering is to be.

In the old spot by the river

Right well known to you and me!

*Policeman Z.* Stop that! Stop that, I tell you!

*Man (sings louder).*

One word more, for signal token,  
Whistle up the marching tune,  
With your pike upon your shoulder,  
At the Rising of the Moon.

*Policeman Z.* If you don't stop that I'll arrest you. [*A whistle from below answers, repeating the air.*]

*Policeman Z.* That's a signal (*stands between him and steps*). You must not pass this way . . . Step farther back . . . Who are you? You are no ballad-singer.

*Man.* You needn't ask who I am; that placard will tell you (*points to placard*).

*Policeman Z.* You are the man I am looking for.

*Man (takes off hat and wig. Policeman Z seizes them).* I am. There's a hundred pounds on my head. There is a friend of mine below in a boat. He knows a safe place to bring me to.

*Policeman Z (looking still at hat and wig).* It's a pity! it's a pity. You deceived me. You deceived me well.

*Man.* I am the friend of Granuaile. There is a hundred pounds on my head.

*Policeman Z.* It's a pity, it's a pity!

*Man.* Will you let me pass, or must I make you let me?

*Policeman Z.* I am in the force. I will not let you pass.

*Man.* I thought to do it with my tongue (*puts hand in breast*). What is that?



[*Voice of Policeman X outside.* Here, this is where we left him.

*Policeman Z.* It's my comrades coming.

*Man.* You won't betray me . . . the friend of Granuaile (*slips behind barrel*).

[*Voice of Policeman B.* That was the last of the placards.

*Policeman X (as they come in).* If he makes his escape it won't be unknown he'll make it.

[*Policeman Z puts hat and wig behind his back.*

*Policeman B.* Did anyone come this way?

*Policeman Z.* No one.

*Policeman B.* No one at all?

*Policeman Z.* No one at all.

*Policeman B.* We had no orders to go back to the station; we can stop along with you.

*Policeman Z.* I don't want you. There is nothing for you to do here.

*Policeman B.* You bade us to come back here and keep watch with you.

*Policeman Z.* I'd sooner be alone. Would any man come this way and you making all that talk? It is better the place to be quiet.

*Policeman B.* Well, we'll leave you the lantern anyhow. [*Hands it to him.*

*Policeman Z.* I don't want it. Bring it with you.

*Policeman B.* You might want it. There are clouds coming up and you have the darkness of the night before you yet. I'll leave it over here on the barrel. [*Goes to barrel.*

*Policeman Z.* Bring it with you I tell you. No more talk.

*Policeman B.* Well, I thought it might be a comfort to you. I often think when I have it in my hand and can be flashing it about into every dark corner (*doing so*) that it's the same as being beside the fire at home, and the bits of bogwood blazing up now and again.

[*Flashes it about, now on the barrel, now on Policeman Z.*]

*Policeman Z (furious).* Be off the two of you, yourselves and your lantern !

[*They go out. Man comes from behind barrel. He and Policeman Z stand looking at one another.*]

*Policeman Z.* What are you waiting for ?

*Man.* For my hat, of course, and my wig. You wouldn't wish me to get my death of cold ?

[*Policeman Z gives them.*]

*Man (going towards steps).* Well, good-night, comrade, and thank you. You did me a good turn to-night, and I'm obliged to you. Maybe I'll be able to do as much for you when the small rise up and the big fall down . . . when we all change places at the Rising (*waves his hand and disappears*) of the Moon.

*Policeman Z (turning his back to audience and reading placard).* A hundred pounds reward ! A hundred pounds ! (*Turns towards audience.*) I wonder now, am I as great a fool as I think I am ?

THE POORHOUSE.

DR. DOUGLAS HYDE and I wrote *The Poorhouse* together, I giving in plot what he gave back in dialogue. I would not have my name put with his then, as I thought the play would be more acceptable to Irish speakers without even the ancestry of a scenario in the "Bearla."

But now we find that players in English in their turn think we should wrong what was created in Gaelic by playing it in translation; so we have put both our names to the little play with the object rather than the hope of commending it to both sides.

AUGUSTA GREGORY.

*May 21, 1906.*



# THE POORHOUSE.

## PERSONS.

COLUM.

THE MATRON.

PAUDEEN.

THE DOORKEEPER.

A COUNTRY WOMAN.

SCENE: *A Poorhouse Ward. Two beds with a little space between them. An old man in each bed of them. There are other beds at the side; they are not seen, but one hears now and again voices of the men that are in them.*

*Matron (comes in and stoops over one of the beds).*  
Are you better to-day, Paudeen? Would you like anything?

*Paudeen.* I am better than I was yesterday, may good be with you.

*Matron.* Is there anything you are wanting?

*Paudeen.* Not a ha'porth, I am thankful to you.

*[The Matron goes to the other bed.]*

*Matron.* And are you better, Colum?

*Colum.* No loss at all on me, ma'am, thank you, but the cough that is sticking to me always, and the

sort of itching on my heart. It seems to me that if it could be pulled out and scoured, and put back again, I would have some ease.

*Matron.* Ah, Colum, I am afraid there is no doctor in Dublin itself could do that feat for you. Is there anything you are wanting?

*Colum.* There is not, but a vessel of water or of milk to be beside me; the thirst is attacking me always. I cannot satisfy it.

*Matron.* Did the doctor give you leave to have milk?

*Colum.* He did not say against it.

*Doorkeeper (coming in, to Matron).* There is a woman below asking to say a couple of words to you. She came to take some old man with her out of this house, if she got leave from you.

*Matron.* That'll do. I will come down with you. And, Colum, I will be back at the end of a half hour, and I will put a vessel of milk at the head of your bed.

*Paudeen.* Don't give the whole of the milk to that man; give a share of it to me.

*Matron.* I will, when I come back.

[*She and the Doorkeeper go out.*]

*Colum.* Aurah, aren't you the devil to be asking milk of the mistress and you not wanting it?

*Paudeen.* And why would I not be wanting it the same as yourself?

*Colum.* There is no thirst on you no more than on the post of my bed, but envying me and jealous of

me you are, the way you always were for threescore years, and as you will be for ever.

*Paudeen (raising his voice).* Envyng you and jealous of you. Ha! ha! ha! Aurah, isn't it a pretty old schemer I'd be jealous of! An old corpse of speckled shins that is in you.

*A Voice (on Paudeen's side of the ward).* Oh murder! There is the pair of them beginning again.

*Another Voice.* Shut your mouth, and we'll have the sport.

*Colum.* Old corpse of speckled shins does he say? Aurah! O Lord, if I could rise out of this bed, it is short till he would know what sort of a corpse I am.

*A Voice.* Stick to him, Colum.

*Another Voice.* Don't leave it with Colum, Paudeen.

*Paudeen (rising on his elbow).* I will not leave it, and it is not right to leave it, when he knows, in the middle of his heart, there is no old *sprealair* in Ireland could be put beside him for lying, for knavery, for softheadedness, and for brutishness.

*Colum (rising on his elbow).* *Maiseadh*, it's I who knows who is quarrelsome and lying from nature, that had not but knavery in his heart and lies in his mouth since he was put out of the cradle. The poor widow that had nothing of the store and cost of the world but the three ducks only, who stole them from her? Answer me that! I saw him doing it. Now!

*Paudeen.* If I did that trick itself and I a boy, it wasn't to the Souper school I used to be going to get my share of learning like yourself. Now!

*Colum.* To the Souper school! O, listen to that! The most respectable man in Ireland it was that taught me my share of learning. He did not teach me to go backbiting other people and telling lies about them, to get the place for myself, the way you did about Seumas O'Connor.

*Paudeen.* And who burned Seaghan Ban's barn? Answer me that.

*A Voice.* That's it, Paudeen.

*Another Voice.* Now, Colum, give it to him.

*Colum.* And if I set fire to Seaghan's barn, it wasn't by myself I was, but I was along with the honestest and the most respectable people in the parish, that would do nothing but the thing would be honest and right. A company that you were never in the like of, for you would not be let into it!

*A Voice.* Long life to you, Colum.

*Another Voice.* Now, Paudeen, give him a prick.

*Paudeen.* It's true for you. I never practised to be among the thieves and the destroyers and the rapparees of the world like yourself. I had no acquaintance with them. It's not burning barns or robbing people I used to be, but giving heed to my own work.

*Colum.* I know well what your own work was. Who was it put a good appearance on the two bullocks that had the disease on them, and sold



them, and they died on the morrow? You went bail for them that they were sound, and you denied it after.

*Paudeen.* Who drove Seumas Ruadh's ass before him when he found it on the road, and said that it was his own?

*Colum.* And who hung his old shirt out of the window the time the King came? Seeking to be made a magistrate he was! (*Great laughter from the beds on each side.*) And you without the use of your feet.

*Paudeen.* I had once the use of my feet and it's a thing you never had. Didn't Nora O'Brien say of your dancing long ago it was a better dance you'd make to leave your legs at home, and to be dancing on your head?

*Colum.* But what did Nora say when she saw you scratching and scrapin' yourself at the Mass? She said there wasn't a girl in the seven parishes that you wouldn't scare.

*Paudeen.* How well I didn't scare Red Sarah when you thought you had her yourself.

*Colum.* And the creature! It's little of the pleasure of the world she had after that.

*Paudeen (sitting up).* I never lay for three hours of the clock in the middle of the street a fair day, and I red drunk, till the peelers brought me with them to the barracks.

*Colum (sitting up).* That's true for you. It was never drunkenness or anything half as respectable

brought you to the barracks, but betraying and spying and telling lies on the neighbours.

*Paudeen (gnashing his teeth at him).* It's finely I'd leather your bones now if I could rise up, but remember, you vagabone, the fine welting I gave you thirty years ago at the fair of Dunmore, that left your stump of a nose crushed and broken from that out.

*Colum.* Isn't it fine memory entirely you have! but don't forget the day I threw you down from the top of the bridge in the big river. You were drowned that time surely, but that it was your hanging you were born for.

*Paudeen.* You be choked! [*Takes up his pillow and throws it at the other man.*]

*Colum.* The binding of death on you, you old sprealaire. [*He throws his own pillow.*]

*A Voice.* That's it now! Hit him, Paudeen!

*Another Voice.* Give it to him, Colum.

*Another Voice.* That pair are fighting one another since the day they were born, like two whelps, and they're going at one another's throats yet, and they two lame old dogs.

*Paudeen (throwing his pipe at the other man that it breaks).* Och, if I had but the use of my two feet, you'd catch it from me!

*Colum (throwing his prayerbook at Paudeen).* O Lord! I not to be able to rise.

*Paudeen (throwing his tin mug).* If I was able to knock that crooked eye out of you altogether, it would be better to me than a sight of heaven.

*Colum (throwing his own can).* It failed you as it always failed you. Here's at you with the can.

*A Voice.* The Pooka'll take you.

*Another Voice.* Quiet, quiet!

*Another Voice.* Quit your noise! The Mistress is coming.

*Many Voices.* Whist, she's coming.

*Paudeen (settling Colum's pillow hastily under his own head and lying down).* My grief, the ridge of the whole world not to be between myself and yourself, you rogue of ill luck!

*Colum (doing the same thing).* It is a hard case you to be beside me here through the length of two months now; it would be better to me the Old Boy himself to be in your bed than you.

[*The Matron comes in again and a woman from the country with her, comely and comfortably dressed.*

*The Matron.* Colum, here is your sister.

*Woman (stooping down and kissing Colum).* Aurah, Colum, achree! Isn't it a poor place that I see you? Aurah, what way are you, or are you living at all?

*Colum.* Well, Kate, you never asked after me this five years, and what is on you now to be coming to me?

*Woman.* Didn't you hear, Colum? My poor man died, and I am alone with myself now, with none but me in it. I was that lonely I could not stand it. I said to myself that I would come seeking you, and that I would bring you out of this place.

*Colum.* Oh! the blessing of God on you, Kate!

*Woman.* You will be better with me than you are here.

*Colum.* And what way of living have you now, Kate? are you middling well off?

*Woman.* I have a good house, and I have three lambs to send to the fair of Dunmore after to-morrow.

*Colum.* And you will bring me with you to-day?

*Woman.* It is what I was saying to myself, it would take a share of the loneliness from me you to be with me. You could be sitting in the corner, and minding the pot, and the fire; and throwing a little grain of meal to the chickens while I would be out in the fields.

*Colum.* Oh! the blessing of God on you, Kate.

*Woman.* There is a neighbour of my own without, and a cart with him, and he promised me to bring you home with him as far as my house, if you come now. I got leave from the Mistress to bring you with me.

*Colum.* It's I that will come. May God reward you, Kate, astore!

*Paudeen* (*sits up and begins to sigh and to groan*).  
Ochone! ochone! Is it going away from me you are now, Colum, and leaving me here after you! I that was near you ever since you were born. You are leaving me among strangers now. Ochone! ochone!  
[*He begins to cry.*]

*Colum.* Kate, avourneen——

*Woman.* What is it?



*Colum.* I won't anger you if I ask a little thing of you?

*Woman.* You will not.

*Colum.* *Maiseadh*, God bless you, and bring the two of us with you.

*Woman.* Is it out of your senses you are, Colum? Why would I bring that man with me?

*Colum.* Because it's I am asking you.

*Woman.* Indeed, I will not, sorra foot. Let him stop in the place where he is, and it's good enough for him.

*Colum.* Kate.

*Woman.* What is it now?

*Colum.* It is what I am considering, this place is not too bad entirely, not as bad you know as they say.

*Woman.* Maybe you'd sooner be in it than in my house.

*Colum.* That's not so, that's not so; but it is what I was thinking to myself, I am not certain, certain as you might say, how . . .

[*He begins stammering.*]

*Woman.* Speak out.

*Colum.* I wasn't certain you know, what way I would be with you. . . .

*Woman.* O, if you would sooner be here. . . .

*Colum.* That's not it, that's not it; but, Kate, will you bring this man along with me?

*Woman.* I see now that you are out of your senses altogether.

*Colum.* That's not so, Kate, but . . .

*Woman.* Oh! if you would sooner be here, it's the same to me. If it's lonesome I am, I won't be long by myself. If I wanted a husband, I wouldn't have far to go to get him, and the comfortable way of living I have, and my three lambs going to the fair after to-morrow.

*Colum.* O Kate, astore, bring the both of us with you.

*Woman.* No fear of me. You have your choice now. Come with me, or stop where you are.

*Colum.* Kate, I am thinking I will stop.

*Woman (angrily turning her back to him).* That will do, I gave you your own choice. I am going.

*A thin, weak, broken little voice (from an old man in another bed).* Oh, ma'am, look, ma'am. . . .

*Woman (half turning).* What is that?

*The Voice.* If you are lonesome, it is I myself would make the kind, fitting husband to you.

*Woman.* P'suit.

*The Voice.* I am ready to go with you; take me, and I will make the kind husband, day and night to you.

[*Laughter from the other beds.*]

*Woman (turning to Colum).* You will not come with me, so?

*Colum.* I will stop, Kate; I will stop, unless you will bring this other man with you.

*Woman.* *Maiseadh*, that there may be no luck to you. Good-bye to you.

[*She goes away.*]

*The same Voice.* It is I that would have made the good, kind husband to her.

[*Laughter.*]

*Colum.* She is gone.

*A Voice.* Why didn't you go with her?

*Colum.* That old vagabone would be lonesome without some person to be fighting him.

*Paudeen.* You lie.

*Colum.* He must always be quarrelling with some person. He would be lonesome without me to go against him.

*Paudeen.* You are beginning on your share of lies again.

*Colum.* That is no lie, you old glugger, you.

*Paudeen.* Old glugger! O, wait a while!

*[He takes his pillow and threatens the other man.]*

*Colum.* You ugly Rogaire!

*[He takes up his own pillow.]*

*Voices.* Oh, God save us! Look at them at the old work again!

*[They threaten one another with their pillows.]*





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